

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of the Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A binding line for gathering a plurality of signatures to form a book, comprising:

a gathering conveyor;

a plurality of packer boxes positioned along the conveyor, each of the packer boxes being adapted to deliver a signature to the conveyor;

a feeder system operatively associated with at least one of the packer boxes, the feeder system including a feed conveyor and a plurality of feeder boxes, each of the feeder boxes being adapted to deliver a distinct signature to the associated packer box; and

a control system operatively connected to the packer boxes and being adapted to activate the packer boxes to thereby deliver a set of signatures to the gathering conveyor, the control system further being operatively connected to the feeder boxes and being adapted to activate a selected one of the feeder boxes to thereby deliver a selected one of the distinct signatures from the feeder system to the associated packer box.

2. The device of claim 1, each of the selected signatures delivered from the feeder system having a blank reserved portion, and wherein the feeder system includes a printer positioned to apply a predetermined printed message to the reserved portion of the selected signature prior to delivery to the associated packer box.

3. The device of claim 2, each of the selected signatures having a backbone, the printer being positioned to apply the printed message perpendicular to the backbone.

4. The device of claim 2, wherein the control system includes a feed system controller operatively connected to the printer, the feed system controller for determining the content of the printed message.
5. The device of claim 2, wherein the feed conveyor includes an output end for delivering the selected signature from the selected feeder box to the associated packer box, and including a printer disposed adjacent the conveyor output end.
6. For use with a binding line having a plurality of packer boxes positioned along a gathering conveyor, a feeder system for feeding at least one of the packer boxes comprising:
 - a plurality of feeder boxes associated with the one packer box, each of the feeder boxes being adapted to contain a distinct signature, each of the feeder boxes being adapted to deliver the distinct signature to a feed conveyor,
 - the feed conveyor being adapted to receive the distinct signatures from the feeder boxes and to deliver the signatures from the feeder boxes to the associated packer box; and
 - a primary controller for activating the packer boxes to thereby deliver a selected set of signatures to the gathering conveyor, the primary controller being operatively connected to a feed system controller for activating a selected one of the feeder boxes to thereby deliver a selected one of the distinct signatures from the plurality of feeder boxes to the associated packer box.

7. The device of claim 6, each of the signatures in the feeder boxes having a blank reserved portion, and including a printer positioned adjacent the feed conveyor for applying a predetermined printed message to the reserved portion of the selected signature prior to delivery to the associated packer box.

8. The device of claim 7, each of the selected signatures having a backbone, the printer being positioned to apply the printed message perpendicular to the backbone.

9. The device of claim 7, wherein the feed system controller is operatively connected to the printer, the feed system controller being adapted to determine the content of the printed message.

10. The device of claim 7, wherein the feed conveyor includes an output end for delivering the selected signature from the selected feeder box to the associated packer box, and wherein the printer is disposed adjacent the conveyor output end.

11. (Previously Presented) A binding line for gathering a plurality of signatures to form a book, comprising:

a gathering conveyor;

a plurality of packer boxes positioned along the conveyor, each of the packer boxes being adapted to deliver a distinct signature to the conveyor;

a primary controller for activating a selected set of packer boxes to thereby deliver a set of signatures to the gathering conveyor; and

adjustable feed means associated with at least one of the packer boxes for delivering a selected signature to the associated packer box, the feed means including a plurality of feeder boxes and having a feed controller operatively connected to the primary controller, the feed controller for causing a selected one of the feeder boxes to deliver a selected signature to the associated packer box.

12. (Previously Presented) A method for expanding the capacity of a binding line comprising the steps of:

providing a binding line adapted to gather a plurality of signatures to form a book and having a plurality of packer boxes positioned along a gathering conveyor[;]
operatively connecting a plurality of feeder boxes to a selected one of the packer boxes;

positioning a feed conveyor adjacent the feeder boxes; and

controlling the feeder boxes to thereby deliver a selected signature to the feed conveyor for delivery to the selected one of the packer boxes.

13. The method of claim 12, including the additional step of applying printed material to the selected signature prior to delivering the selected signature to the selected one of the packer boxes.

14. The method of claim 13, the binding line further including a primary controller for selectively enabling and disabling sets of the packer boxes, and including a feed controller connected to the primary controller for activating the feeder boxes.

15. The method of claim 14, including a printer disposed adjacent an output end of the feed conveyor, and including the additional step of programming a controller to apply distinct printed material to each selected signature.

16. (New) A binding line for gathering a plurality of signatures to form books, comprising:

a plurality of packer boxes for delivering an associated signature to be gathered to form first and second books;

a feeder system operatively associated with at least one of the packer boxes that includes a conveyor and a plurality of feeder boxes, each of the feeder boxes being adapted to deliver a distinct signature to the associated packer box; and

a control system operatively connected to the packer boxes and being adapted to activate the packer boxes to thereby deliver a set of signatures to a gathering conveyor, the control system further being operatively connected to the feeder boxes and being adapted to activate a selected one of the feeder boxes to thereby deliver a selected set of distinct signatures from the feeder system to the associated packer box to form the first book and activate a second selected one of the feeder boxes to deliver a second selected set of distinct signatures from the feeder system to the associated packer box to form the second book.

17. (New) The binding line of claim 16, wherein the feeder system further includes a printer positioned to apply a predetermined printed message to a reserved portion of the signatures delivered from the feeder boxes prior to delivery to the associated packer box.

18. (New) The binding line of claim 17, wherein each of the signatures has a backbone and the printer applies the printed message perpendicular to the backbone.

19. (New) The binding line of claim 17, wherein the control system is in communication with the printer to determine the content of the printed message applied to the signatures.

20. (New) The binding line of claim 17, wherein the conveyor includes an output end for delivering the signatures from the feeder boxes to the associated packer box and the printer is positioned adjacent the output end of the conveyor.

21. (New) The binding line of claim 17, wherein the control system being adapted to activate a selected one of the feeder boxes comprises being adapted to activate a combination of the feeder boxes including the selected one of the feeder boxes to deliver a plurality of distinct signatures from the feeder system to the associated packer box to form the first book.

22. (New) A feeder system for delivering signatures to an associated one of a plurality of packer boxes on a binding line, comprising:

a plurality of feeder boxes each adapted to deliver a distinct signature to the associated one of the packer boxes; and

a primary controller for activating the packer boxes to thereby deliver a selected set of signatures to a gathering conveyor, the primary controller being operatively connected to a feed system controller for activating a selected one of the feeder boxes to thereby deliver a first selected one of the distinct signatures from the plurality of feeder boxes to the associated packer box at a first time and for activating a second selected one of the feeder boxes to thereby deliver a second selected one of the distinct signatures different from the first selected one of the signatures at a second time.

23. (New) The feeder system of claim 22, further comprising a printer for applying a predetermined customized or personalized printed message to a reserved portion of the signatures delivered from the feeder boxes prior to delivery to the associated one of the packer boxes.

24. (New) The feeder system of claim 23, wherein each of the signatures has a backbone and the printer applies the printed message perpendicular to the backbone.

25. (New) The feeder system of claim 23, wherein the primary controller is in communication with the printer to determine the content of the printed message applied to the signatures.

26. (New) The feeder system of claim 22, including a feed conveyor for delivering the distinct signatures from the feeder boxes to the associated one of the packer boxes.

27. (New) The feeder system of claim 26, wherein the feed conveyor has an output end, and a printer is positioned adjacent the output end of the feed conveyor.

28. (New) The feeder system of claim 22, wherein the primary controller being operatively connected to the feed system controller for activating a selected one of the feeder boxes comprises activating a first combination of the feeder boxes including the selected one of the feeder boxes to deliver a first combination of signatures including the first selected one of the distinct signatures from the plurality of feeder boxes to the associated packer box and wherein activating a second selected one of the feeder boxes comprises activating a second combination of the feeder boxes including the second selected one of the feeder boxes to deliver a second combination of signatures including the second selected one of the distinct signatures.

29. (New) A method for expanding the capacity of a binding line having a plurality of packer boxes, comprising the steps of:

operatively connecting a plurality of feeder boxes with an associated one of the packer boxes, supplying each of the feeder boxes with a distinct signature; and controlling the feeder boxes to thereby deliver a selected first signature to the feed conveyor for delivery to the selected one of the packer boxes and to deliver a selected second signature different from the first signature to the selected one of the packer boxes.

30. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein selectively controlling the feeder boxes includes programming a controller to select the distinct signature to be delivered to the packer box.

31. (New) The method of claim 29, further comprising applying printed material to the signatures during delivery to the associated one of the packer boxes.

32. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein controlling the feeder boxes includes programming a controller to apply customized or personalized information on the signatures.

33. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein controlling the feeder boxes to thereby deliver the selected first signature to the feed conveyor comprises controlling the feeder boxes to thereby deliver a selected first combination of signatures to the feed conveyor for delivery to the selected one of the packer boxes.

34. (New) A feeder assembly for use with a binding line, comprising:
a feed conveyor configured to be operatively coupled to the binding line;
a plurality of feeder boxes operatively coupled to the feed conveyor and
configured to hold signatures; and
a primary controller for activating packer boxes to thereby deliver a selected
set of signatures to a gathering conveyor, the primary controller being operatively
connected to a feed system controller for activating a selected one of the feeder boxes
to thereby deliver a selected one of the distinct signatures from the plurality of feeder
boxes to an associated packer box and for activating a second selected one of the
feeder boxes to thereby deliver a second selected one of the distinct signatures from
the plurality of feeder boxes to the associated packer box.
35. (New) A feeder assembly as defined in claim 34, wherein the feed conveyor is
configured to be operatively associated with the binding line via a packer box associated with
the binding line.
36. (New) A feeder assembly as defined in claim 34, further comprising a printer
disposed adjacent to the feed conveyor to print on the at least one of the signatures.
37. (New) A feeder assembly as defined in claim 34, wherein each of the feeder boxes is
configured to hold a distinct signature.

38. (New) A feeder assembly as defined in claim 34, wherein the primary controller activating a selected one of the feeder boxes comprises causing the feeder boxes to selectively deliver a first combination of the signatures and activating a second selected one of the feeder boxes comprises causing the feeder boxes to selectively deliver a second combination of the signatures, wherein the first combination of the signatures is different from the second combination of the signatures.